

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 17885 130612Z

17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 DPW-01 EB-04 ACDA-05 /069 W

----- 086685

R 130455Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8309

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH UNN

AMEMBASSY RANGOON UNN

AMEMBASSY SAIGON UNN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17885

E.O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA

SUBJECT: THAI FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO LAOS

REF: A. BANGKOK 17862, B. FBIS D090600Z NOV 1974, C. FBIS

D100248 NOV 1974

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE THAI FOREIGN MINISTER LED A DELEGATION TO LAOS NOVEMBER 6-8. THE THAI OFFERED IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TOTALLING 15 MILLION BAHT (\$750,000) AND DISCUSSED LONGER-TERM ECONOMIC AID TO LAOS. THE THAI WERE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT WHO SPOKE FREQUENTLY OF THE CLOSE ETHNIC AND HISTORICAL TIES BETWEEN LAOS AND THAILAND. PRINCE SOUPHOANOUVONG RAISED THE ISSUE OF U.S. FORCES IN THAILAND, AND FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN REPLIED THAT THAILAND RESPECTS LAO NEUTRALITY AND THAT THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN LAOS IS A THREAT TO THAI SECURITY. THE LAO SIDE RAISED THE ISSUE OF TRANSPORT THROUGH THAILAND TO LAOS, AND THE THAI DELEGATION AGREED TO PLACE THIS ISSUE ON THE AGENDA OF THE NEXT THAI/LAO JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING. THE RTG

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 17885 130612Z

CONSIDERS THE VISIT AND SUCCESSFUL GOODWILL MISSION ON

WHICH IT CAN BUILD IN IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA LED A DELEGATION OF THAI OFFICIALS ON A VISIT TO LAOS NOVEMBER 6-8. WISHING TO DEMONSTRATE ITS GOODWILL TOWARD THE LAO COALITION GOVERNMENT, THE RTG HAD ASKED THE LAO BEFORE THE VISIT HOW THAILAND COULD ASSIST IN THE ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF LAOS. THE THAI DELEGATION THUS WENT TO VEINTIANE ARMED WITH OFFERS OF FIVE MILLION BAHT (\$250,000) IN GRANT ASSISTANCE AND AN ADDITIONAL TEN MILLION BAHT (\$500,000) IN COMMODITY ASSISTANCE. THE THAI ALSO CAME PREPARED TO DISCUSS LONGER TERM ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO LAOS. A MEMBER OF THE RTG DELEGATION SAID LAO OFFICIALS RECEIVED THESE OFFERS QUITE WELL.

2. ACCORDING TO A MEMBER OF THE RTG DELEGATION, ONE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO SIZE UP THE PATHET LAO MEMBERS OF THE PGNU TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THEY WERE HARD-LINE COMMUNISTS OR LAO NATIONALISTS. THE THAI WERE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH THE PATHET LAO MINISTERS, ESPECIALLY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT. PHOUMI WAS FRIENDLY AND SPOKE FREQUENTLY OF THE CLOSE ETHNIC AND HISTORICAL TIES BETWEEN LAOS AND THAILAND. HE SAID THESE TIES ENABLE LAOS TO HAVE CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THAILAND THAN WITH ANY OTHER FOREIGN COUNTRY -- A STATEMENT WHICH IMPRESSED THE THAI GREATLY.

3. THE MEETING WITH PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG WAS MORE TENSE BUT NEVERTHELESS PRODUCTIVE FROM THE THAI PERSPECTIVE. SOUPHANAOUVONG STARTED OUT BY RAISING THE ISSUE OF U.S. FORCES IN THAILAND AND THE ALLEGED THREAT WHICH THAI MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. POSES TO LAO NEUTRALITY. CHARUNPHAN RESPONDED THAT THAILAND RESPECTS LAO NEUTRALITY, THAT IT HAS WITHDRAWN ALL ITS FORCES FROM LAOS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PEACE AGREEMENT, THAT THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND HAS ALREADY UNDERGONE SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS, AND THAT FUTURE REDUCTIONS WILL DEPEND ON THE SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 17885 130612Z

APPARENTLY WITHOUT NAMING NORTH VIET NAM OR CHINA, CHARUNPHAN ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO MENTION THAT THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN LAOS IS A THREAT TO THAI SECURITY. PHOUMI ALSO EXPRESSED HIS DESIRE FOR THE REMOVAL OF U.S. FORCES FROM THAILAND, THOUGH NOT AS STRONGLY, AND RECEIVED THE SAME REPLY. A MEMBER OF THE THAI DELEGATION SAID THE LAO RECEIVED CHARUNPHAN'S REPLY QUITE WELL. PHOUMI ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT

LAOS DOES NOT WANT THE PROTECTION WHICH THE SEATO TREATY ACCORDS TO IT.

4. THE THAI DELEGATION WAS ALSO FAVORABLY IMPRESSED THAT THE DRV AMBASSADOR, IN HIS CAPACITY AS DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, MET THE THAI DELEGATION AT THE AIRPORT AND ATTENDED A RECEPTION WHICH THE THAI AMBASSADOR TO LAOS HOSTED FOR THE VISITORS. THE THAI CONSIDERED THIS A FRIENDLY GESTURE SINCE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DO NOT NORMALLY ATTEND SUCH FUNCTIONS.

5. CHARUNPHAN ALSO MADE BRIEF COURTESY CALLS ON THE KING OF LAOS AND PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA. BOTH SOUVANNA AND PHOUMI, AS WELL AS A SMALL GROUP OF DEMONSTRATING STUDENTS, RAISED THE PROBLEM OF TRANSPORT THROUGH THAILAND TO LAOS, ALTHOUGH A MEMBER OF THE THAI DELEGATION SAID THAT PHOUMI'S REPRESENTATION WAS HALF-HEARTED. THE THAI DELEGATION DID NOT DISCUSS WITH THE LAO SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS TO THE TRANSPORT PROBLEM BUT AGREED TO PUT THIS AND OTHER LONG-STANDING PROBLEMS ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE THAI-LAO JOINT COMMITTEE, WHICH THE RTG HOPES WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE THAI GENERAL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR 26 JANUARY 1975. A THAI FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL CONFIRMED A "BANGKOK POST" REPORT (REF C) THAT THE RTG IS CONSIDERING DIRECT SUBSIDIES TO THE EXPRESS TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION TO REDUCE TRANSPORT COSTS FOR THE LAO. ANOTHER MFA OFFICIAL POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH SUBSIDIES WOULD BENEFIT LAO MERCHANTS RATHER THAN THE LAO GOVERNMENT.

6. COMMENT: THE RTG CONSIDERS THE VISIT TO LAOS A SUCCESSFUL GOODWILL MISSION ON WHICH IT CAN BUILD IN IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE THAI
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BANGKO 17885 130612Z

WERE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH THE WARMTH AND HOSPITALITY OF PATHET LAO MEMBERS OF THE PGNU IN VIEW OF THE RECENT HOSTILITIES BETWEEN PATHET LAO FORCES AND THAI VOLUNTEERS IN LAOS. NEVERTHELESS THE THAI DELEGATION HELD ITS GROUND ON SECURITY ISSUES AND RESPONDED FRANKLY TO PATHET LAO REPRESENTATIONS ON THE U.S. USE OF THAI AIR BASES. THE THAI RECOGNIZE THAT THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES IN LAOS IS A THREAT TO THAILAND'S SECURITY DESPITE PGNU PROTESTATIONS OF GOODWILL.
KINTNER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, COLLECTIVE SECURITY, MEETING AGENDA, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NEUTRALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO17885
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740326-0778
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741149/aaaaboxj.tel
Line Count: 164
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. BANGKOK 17862, B. FBIS D090600Z N, OV 1974, C. FBIS
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO LAOS
TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA, (CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005